



A

## Greater Washington

### Board of Directors

Harry Belin  
Roger Blunt  
Rich Bradley  
Lyles Carr  
Bernard Demczuk  
Paul Farragut  
Christopher Gergen  
James Gibson  
Mary Frances leMat  
Clark Lobenstine  
Sue Marshall  
Harold McDougall  
Robert McLean  
Esther Newman  
Patty Nicoson  
Beatriz Otero  
Brenda Richardson  
Michael Rogers  
Bob Rosen  
John Sherman  
Beverly Silverberg  
Lisa Sullivan  
Margaret Vanderhye  
Jan Verhage  
Jack Walter  
Susan Williams  
David Winstead  
Alice Yang Yeh

Bruce Adams  
*President*

7211 Exeter Road  
Bethesda, MD 20814

301.652.4019  
Fax 301.652.0691  
bruce@greaterwash.org

Robert M. Brandon  
*Director*

1730 Rhode Island Ave., NW  
Suite 712  
Washington, DC 20036

202.331.1550  
Fax 202.331.1663  
main@greaterwash.org

Fields of Dreams is an after-school and summer camp program that serves many of the most important goals you have for the children of this City. Fields of Dreams is a structured after-school and summer opportunity that provides homework assistance, nutrition lessons, daily exercise, academic enrichment, and character education based on the values that guided the life of the great civil rights leader and baseball pioneer Jackie Robinson.

Since our start in 2002, we have served well over 1,000 children in some of the poorest neighborhoods of the District. This Fall, our program served 140 children in six elementary schools and one middle school. In these last four years, we have invested \$90,000 in improving and maintaining nine baseball and softball fields throughout the City.

I wish you could have attended our end-of-season Jamboree at Jackie Robinson Field in SE on a gorgeous Saturday afternoon last month. More than 100 young Dreamers playing ball on well manicured fields with at least 75 family members cheering them on, a nutritious lunch for the children and their families, and then each school presented a skit based on one of Jackie Robinson's values. We hear a lot about what is wrong with our kids today, but this was an afternoon celebration of what is right with our kids.

So if Fields of Dreams is so good, why am I so frustrated? Because the hope that was generated by the return of baseball to Washington has not been fully realized. Not even close. Yes, our young Dreamers had a blast going to the Nationals games this season. But the flood of resources that we expected to flow to our program and to the other youth baseball and softball programs serving City young people has been but a trickle. We have developed a great program, but we are not serving nearly enough children. In the absence of a local owner, the Nationals have chosen to hold onto money that should be going to serve our kids.

Please approve this lease to help make the resources available that we need to serve additional children with proven programs. Next Spring, we want to take our Fields of Dreams program to serve children at two of the Boys & Girls Clubs in the City. We also want to add new schools.

Our program works. The parents and teachers at every school tell us the children are more focused, better behaved, and ready to learn because they want to be part of Fields of Dreams.

Members of Council, please approve this lease. Major League Baseball, please give us a local owner willing to support our children. We are serving 140 children in seven schools. We should be serving 400 children in twenty schools. Help us fulfill our dream. Help us serve these children who have so little and deserve so much.

Testimony of Bruce Adams, Co-Founder of Fields of Dreams  
Before the City Council Committee on Economic Development  
Tuesday, December 13, 2005